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Whence Cometh Help

JOHN WRIGHT BUCKHAM

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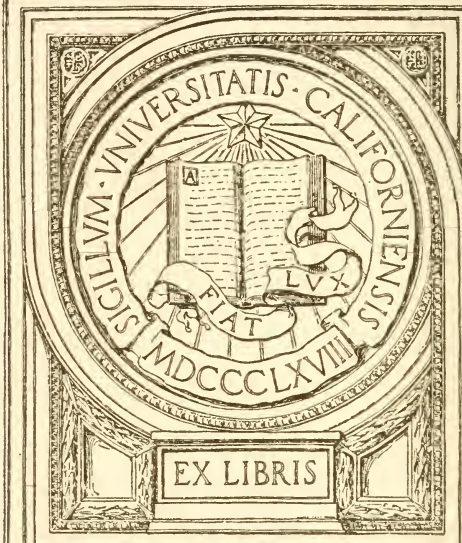

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Whence Cometh Help

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Whence Cometh Help

An Aid
To Home and Individual
Devotions

PREPARED BY

JOHN WRIGHT BUCKHAM

BOSTON
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By John Wright Buckham

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To One

WHO BY FAITH AND LOVE
HAS MADE FOR HIM A TRUE HOME,

This little volume of devotions

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY

THE COMPILER

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PREFACE

If family worship is declining, it is due, in large part, not to a loss of faith in its value, but to the practical and immediate difficulties that lie in the way, owing to changed conditions to which we have not yet adjusted ourselves.

The chief obstacle is the lack of time and the pressure of other interests. The rush and whirl of modern life are proverbial. One may lament this as much as he likes, but, struggle as he may, he cannot extricate himself wholly from the whirling vortex. He must adjust his life to his time and environment. Much more must the family. Business and school and home duties will not wait for long and solemn family devotions such as our fathers held. They must be brief, or not at all. And brevity is not without its merits. Any one who recalls his uneasiness as a child during the long Scripture reading and prayer will realize that, as far as the children are concerned, — and who is concerned so much as they? — a brief form of family worship, if it be sweet and earnest, and full of meaning, is adapted to make a deeper and better impression on the child than a prolonged service, during which his mind wanders and his limbs ache.

This little manual is prepared expressly with a view to the urgent necessity of brevity. If it be charged with the fault of conspiring with business and pleasure in robbing God of the time which is due to him and his worship, the answer is that in many instances the choice lies between a brief service and none at all. Nor is a short service necessarily lacking in reverence or in power of impression. A few vital, beautiful, fitting words are often most fruitful. The kingdom of God is as a grain of mustard seed. It is in just this virtue of vital compactness, this *multum in parvo* quality, that the historic collects of the church and the written prayers of many devout and gifted individuals excel. For this reason they are used here, and to assist those who feel timid about offering *ex tempore* prayer, and who, for that reason, have never held family worship. In no sense is it the intent of the compiler to promote the custom of using prepared forms in place of the spontaneous and heartfelt prayer of

the individual soul, but rather to assist and supplement such prayer by furnishing a few models of devout and beautiful petition adapted to family or individual use.

The passages of Scripture given for each day, with the alternative readings, are chosen with the same end in view,—that of offering compact and vital passages wherein truth and inspiration and guidance are compressed into the narrowest compass. They, too, are given only as models and examples of similar passages of which the Bible is full. I have not followed the prevalent custom of adding selections from other writers, because the combination almost always impresses one unfavorably, for the reason that miscellaneous selections, good as they may be, suffer in comparison with the virility and authoritativeness of the Bible.

It is intended that the Lord's Prayer be repeated in concert to close the devotions each morning, and if familiar passages like the Twenty-third Psalm and the Beatitudes are committed and repeated in unison, it adds much to the fellowship and joy of the service. There are already numerous devotional collections, some of them, like "Closet and Altar" and "The Quiet Hour," of great fitness and value, but none possesses the brevity and inexpensiveness of this manual. [Acknowledgment of especial indebtedness is made to the admirable collection, "Prayers Ancient and Modern," selected and arranged by the editor of "Daily Strength for Daily Needs." The singing of a hymn is recommended, particularly on Sundays and special days.

I cannot close without addressing a most earnest appeal to all into whose hands this little volume may fall, to hallow the home by maintaining at whatever cost of personal sacrifice or effort, whether with the aid herein offered or without it, some form of family worship. It will bring strength and blessing from the everlasting hills, whence cometh help.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

A General Confession

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare Thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore Thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. AMEN.

A Service for Each Day of the Month

First Day

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. — Ps. 121.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 27: 1–6; Rom. 12: 1–5.

ALMIGHTY God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *Gregorian Sacramentary, A. D. 590.*

WE yield thee hearty thanks, O Lord our God, for thy great goodness to us. Mercifully assist us in every duty each one of us has to do, and vouchsafe to be our Companion every day, from morning to night and night to morning; that we may love thy presence and walk in it vigilantly, and, being delivered from all errors and adversities, may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; and grant us thy peace all the days of our life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *James Skinner (1818–1882).*

Second Day

And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. — MARK 9: 2–8.

Alternative Readings. — PS. 46; 1 PET. 1: 3–8.

O GOD, who on the mount didst reveal to chosen witnesses thine only-begotten Son, wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistering; mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may be permitted to behold the King in his beauty, who with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. AMEN.

O GOD, who art the guide and shepherd of all faithful souls; Grant unto us who have now tasted of thy goodness, that the eyes of our spirit may never cease to see Thee, nor our ears to hear thy voice, that so we, constantly remembering thy love and goodness toward men, may with a pure heart and faithful mind give ourselves to serve and follow Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Third Day

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. — Ps. 23.

Alternative Readings. — Luke 9: 12–17; Heb. 13: 14–16, 20, 21.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings, being ordered by thy governance, may be righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *Gelasian Sacramentary, A. D. 494.*

BLESS us, O Lord, with thy heavenly benediction; so that, rejoicing in thy strength, and trusting in thy loving-kindness, we may obtain a blessed immortality. Amen.

— *Sarum Breviary, A. D. 1085.*

Fourth Day

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

— 1 JOHN 4: 7–12.

Alternative Readings. — JOHN 13: 5–15; 1 COR. 12: 12–20.

O GOD, we have known and believed the love that Thou hast for us. May we, by dwelling in love, dwell in Thee, and Thou in us. May we learn to love Thee whom we have not seen, by loving our brethren whom we have seen. Teach us, O heavenly Father, the love wherewith Thou hast loved us; fashion us, O blessed Lord, after thine own example of love; shed abroad, O Thou Holy Spirit of Love, the love of God and man in our hearts. AMEN.

— *Henry Alford.*

O LORD, we beseech Thee mercifully to receive our prayers; and grant that we may both perceive and know what things we ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *Gregorian Sacramentary, A. D. 590.*

Fifth Day

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. — MATT. 5: 2–10.

Alternative Readings. — Is. 55: 6–13; 1 TIM. 6: 6–12.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN.

O ALMIGHTY Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that, through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. AMEN.

— *Gregorian Sacramentary, A. D. 590.*

Sixth Day

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High.

To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.

For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

To shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. — Ps. 92: 1–5, 12–15.

Alternative Readings. — Matt. 13: 31–33, 44–46; John 1: 1–12.

AS Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, so lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and make us glad with the tokens of thy love. Be Thou with us, O Lord, and let thy grace follow us this day, and all the days of our life. Be Thou our Guide unto death, in death our Comfort, and, after death, our Portion and Happiness everlasting. Amen.

— *Benjamin Jenks (1646–1724).*

ALMIGHTY Lord our God, direct our steps into the way of peace, and strengthen our hearts to obey thy commands; may the Dayspring visit us from on high, and give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death; that they may adore Thee for thy mercy, follow Thee for thy truth, desire Thee for thy sweetness, who art the blessed Lord God of Israel. Amen. — *Ancient Collect.*

Seventh Day

See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Rejoice evermore.

Pray without ceasing.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit.

Despise not prophesyings.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Abstain from all appearance of evil.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. — 1 THESS. 5: 15–23.

Alternative Readings. — MATT. 6: 25–30; ACTS 16: 25–34.

O MOST loving Father, who willest us to give thanks for all things, to dread nothing but the loss of Thee, and to cast all our care on Thee who carest for us; preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, and grant that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that Love which is immortal, and which Thou hast manifested unto us in thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *William Bright.*

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by Thee, we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. AMEN.

Eighth Day

And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. — LUKE 2: 43, 46–52.

Alternative Readings. — EX. 20: 3–17; COL. 3: 20–25.

O LORD, we beseech Thee that we may grow ever in love toward Thee, our Father who art in heaven, and may so be schooled by holy works, that ever, as Thou dost pour thy gifts upon us, we may walk before Thee in all such things as be well-pleasing in the sight of thy Divine Majesty. AMEN.

— *Roman Breviary.*

GIVE, we pray Thee, to all children grace reverently to love their parents, and lovingly to obey them. Teach us all that filial duty never ends or lessens: bless all parents in their children, and all children in their parents, and bring us all at length to our heavenly Home, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Ninth Day

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. — EPH. 3 : 14–21.

Alternative Readings. — HEB. 12 : 1–6; 2 TIM. 4 : 5–8.

WE beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favor, gathered together in the peace of this roof, and under the covert of thy patience. Be patient still; suffer us yet a while longer — with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavors against evil, suffer us a while longer to endure and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to be patient and trustful under affliction. Be with our friends, be with ourselves. With each day's return, return to us, our Sun and Comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts — eager to labor — eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion — and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it. AMEN.

— *Robert Louis Stevenson.*

Tenth Day

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

— Is. 40: 27–31.

Alternative Readings. — John 6: 27–35; Eph. 6: 13–18.

O GOD, the Sovereign Good of the soul, who requirest the hearts of all thy children; deliver us from all sloth in thy work, all coldness in thy cause; and grant us by looking unto Thee to rekindle our love, and by waiting upon Thee to renew our strength, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. — *William Bright.*

O THOU who art Love, and who seest all the suffering, injustice and misery which reign in this world, have pity, we implore Thee, on the work of thy hands. Look mercifully upon the poor, the oppressed, and all who are heavy laden with error, labor and sorrow. Fill our hearts with deep compassion for those who suffer, and hasten the coming of thy kingdom of justice and truth. Amen. — *Eugène Bersier.*

DIRECT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued and ended in Thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eleventh Day

And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

And he called the name of that place Beth-el.

— GEN. 28: 10–12, 16–19.

Alternative Readings. — Is. 44: 21–23; ACTS 17: 22–28.

O LORD our God, who hast chased the slumber from our eyes, and once more assembled us to lift up our hands unto Thee, and to praise thy just judgments, accept our prayers and supplications, and give us faith that maketh not ashamed, confident hope and love unfeigned; bless our coming in and going out, our thoughts, words and works, and let us begin this day with the praise of the unspeakable sweetness of thy mercy. AMEN.

— *Greek Church.*

OPEN wide the window of our spirits, and fill us full of light; open wide the door of our hearts, that we may receive and entertain Thee with all our powers of adoration and love. AMEN.

— *Christina G. Rossetti.*

Twelfth Day

Rejoice in the Lord alway : and again I say, Rejoice.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. — PHIL. 4 : 4–8.

Alternative Readings. — Is. 12 : 1–6; PROV. 16 : 16–23.

O LORD from whom all good things do come, grant to us, thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that are good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN.

— *Gelasian Sacramentary, A. D. 492.*

LORD God Almighty, who art our true Peace, and Love eternal ; enlighten our souls with the brightness of thy peace, and purify our consciences with the sweetness of thy love, that we may with peaceful hearts wait for the Author of peace, and in the adversities of this world may ever have Thee for our Guardian and Protector ; and so being fenced about by thy care, may heartily give ourselves to the love of thy peace. AMEN.

— *Mozarabic Sacramentary.*

Thirteenth Day

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

— JOHN 13: 34, 35; 14: 15–17, 21.

Alternative Readings. — PS. 119: 1–8; 1 JOHN 5: 1–5.

O GOD of love, who hast given a new commandment, through thine only begotten Son, that we should love one another, even as Thou didst love us, the unworthy and the wandering, and gavest thy beloved Son for our life and salvation; we pray Thee, Lord, give to us thy servants, in all time of our life on the earth, a mind forgetful of past ill will, a pure conscience and sincere thoughts, and a heart to love our brethren. AMEN.

— *Coptic Liturgy of St. Cyril.*

GRANT, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, unto us who know that we are weak, and who trust in Thee because we know that Thou art strong, the gladsome help of thy loving-kindness, both here in time and hereafter in eternity. AMEN.

— *Roman Breviary.*

Fourteenth Day

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. — Ps. 51 : 1–4, 9–12.

Alternative Readings. — Luke 18 : 9–14; 2 Cor. 5 : 14–27.

WE pray Thee to compassionate our weakness, O Lord, to guard us in peril, to direct us in doubt, and to save us from falling into sin. From the evil that is around and within us, graciously deliver us. Make the path of duty plain before us, and keep us in it even unto the end. Amen.

— *King's Chapel Liturgy, 1831.*

WE humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, to do away as the night all our transgressions, and to scatter our sins as the morning cloud. Lord, forgive whatsoever is amiss in us, cleanse us from our sin, and let thy Holy Spirit so prevent and accompany and follow us day by day, that we may believe in Thee, and love Thee, and keep thy commandments, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *Goulburn's Family Prayers.*

Fifteenth Day

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. — Ps. 133.

Alternative Readings. — MATT. 12:46–50; 1 JOHN 4:16–21.

O LORD, with whom is the Fountain of Life, give us all, we entreat Thee, grace and good will to follow the leadings of thy most Holy Spirit. Let the dew of thy grace descend and abide upon us, refreshing that which droops, reviving that which is ready to perish; until the day when all thy faithful people shall drink of the river of thy pleasures. AMEN.

— *Christina G. Rossetti.*

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldst be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy fatherly goodness all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body or estate; that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. AMEN.

Sixteenth Day

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. — LUKE 10: 30–37.

Alternative Readings. — JAMES 3: 13–18; ACTS 9: 36–42.

HEAR our prayers, O Lord, and consider our desires. Give unto us true humility, a meek and quiet spirit, a loving and a friendly, a holy and a useful manner of life; bearing the burdens of our neighbors, denying ourselves, and studying to benefit others, and to please Thee in all things. Grant us to be righteous in performing promises, loving to our relatives, careful of our charges; to be gentle and easy to be entreated, slow to anger, and readily prepared for every good work. AMEN.

— *Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667).*

O LORD, make us to love Thee, and each other in Thee, and to meet before Thee to dwell in thine everlasting love. AMEN. — *E. B. Pusey.*

Seventeenth Day

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

For every man shall bear his own burden.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

— Gal. 6 : 1–10.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 139 : 1–10; Rom. 5 : 1–5.

O LORD, renew our spirits and draw our hearts unto Thyself that our work may not be to us a burden, but a delight; and give us such a mighty love to Thee as may sweeten all our obedience. Let us not serve Thee with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with the cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in Thee and rejoicing in thy work. Amen.

— *Benjamin Jenks (1646–1724).*

O GOD, who art Love, grant to thy children to bear one another's burdens in perfect good will, that thy peace which passeth understanding may keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

— *Book of Hours, 1865.*

Eighteenth Day

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. — ROM. 12: 9–18.

Alternative Readings. — PROV. 11: 24–30; MATT. 5: 43–48.

O HOLY and ever-blessed Lord, teach us, we beseech Thee, to love one another, to exercise forbearance and forgiveness towards our enemies; to recompense no man evil for evil, but to be merciful even as Thou, our Father in heaven, art merciful: that so we may continually follow after Thee in all our doings, and be more and more conformed to thine image and likeness. AMEN.

— *New Church Book of Worship, 1876.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the Comfort of the sad, the Strength of sufferers, let the prayers of those that cry out of any tribulation come unto Thee; that all may rejoice to find that thy mercy is present with them in their afflictions; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *Gelasian Sacramentary, A. D. 492.*

Nineteenth Day

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

— MATT. 22: 35–40.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. — ROM. 13: 8–10.

Alternative Readings.— DEUT. 6: 4–9; HOSEA 6: 1–3.

O BLESSED Lord, we beseech Thee to pour down upon us such grace as may not only cleanse these lives of ours, but beautify them a little, if it be thy will, — before we go hence and are no more seen. Grant that we may love Thee with all the heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves — and that we may persevere unto the end; through Jesus Christ. AMEN.

— *James Skinner (1818–1882).*

GRANT us, O Lord, to pass this day in gladness and peace, without stumbling and without stain; that, reaching the eventide victorious over all temptation, we may praise Thee, the eternal God, who art blessed, and dost govern all things, world without end. AMEN.

— *Mozarabic Sacramentary.*

Twentieth Day

O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. — Ps. 95: 1–7.

Alternative Readings. — Luke 17: 12–19; John 13: 16–21.

O THOU Almighty Helper and ever-present God, we bring to Thee all our needs. O Thou Author of all good, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, may thy mercies be our daily song, and may the light of thy countenance in this world of power and beauty move our hearts to great thankfulness and a sweet trust. Day by day Thou dost appoint our portion, especially revealing thy glory in the dear Son of thy love, and calling us into his kingdom of service and blessedness. May this be our love of Thee in Him, that we love one another and keep all his commandments. Amen.

— *Rufus Ellis.*

O GOD, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Twenty-first Day

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. — MATT. 7: 7–12.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 71: 1–5; ROM. 14: 17–21.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve; pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. AMEN.

O GOD:
We feel we are nothing,
For all is Thou and in Thee;
We feel we are something —
That also is from Thee;
We feel we are nothing,
But Thou wilt help us to be;
Hallowèd be thy name.
AMEN.

— *Alfred Tennyson.*

Twenty-second Day

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

— Rev. 22: 1–5, 17.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 40: 1–8; Mark 14: 3–9.

O GOD, who hast prepared for those who love Thee such good things as pass man's understanding; pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD our God, teach us, we beseech Thee, to ask Thee aright for the right blessings. Steer Thou the vessel of our life toward Thyself, Thou tranquil Haven of all storm-tossed souls. Show us the course wherein we should go. Renew a willing spirit within us. Let thy Spirit curb our wayward senses, and guide and enable us unto that which is our true good, to keep thy laws, and in all our works evermore to rejoice in thy glorious and gladdening Presence. For thine is the glory and praise from all thy saints for ever and ever. Amen.

— *St. Basil, A. D. 379.*

Twenty-third Day

Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. — LUKE 8: 22–25.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 107: 23–31; ROM. 8: 14–19.

ALMIGHTY God, Lord of the storm and of the calm, the vexed sea and the quiet haven, of day and of night, of life and of death, — grant unto us so to have our hearts stayed upon thy faithfulness, thine unchangingness and love, that, whatsoever betide us, however black the cloud or dark the night, with quiet faith trusting in Thee, we may look upon Thee with untroubled eye, and walking in lowliness towards Thee, and in lovingness towards one another, abide all storms and troubles of this mortal life, beseeching Thee that they may turn to the soul's true good. We ask it for thy mercy's sake, shown in Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *George Dawson.*

O LORD God, who stilled the waves of the sea and the yet more tempestuous passions of the human heart, grant us thy peace. Let peace and holiness, union and sweet concord be ever present with us; let there be harmony within our walls and within our hearts. AMEN.

— *From A Book of Family Prayers by Clero Laicus.*

Twenty-fourth Day

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

— 1 JOHN 1: 1, 3, 6–9.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 25: 1–9; LUKE 18: 10–14.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast caused the light of eternal life to shine upon the world, we beseech Thee that our hearts may be so kindled with heavenly desires, and thy love so shed abroad in us by thy Holy Spirit, that we may continually seek the things which are above; and, abiding in purity of heart and mind, may at length attain unto thine everlasting kingdom, there to dwell in the glorious light of thy presence, world without end. AMEN.

— *Book of Prayers, 1851.*

LORD, we pray Thee that thy grace may always prevent and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Twenty-fifth Day

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. — MARK 10: 13–16.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

— LUKE 10: 21.

Alternative Readings. — LUKE 9: 46–48; IS. 11: 6–10.

O THOU, who through thy Son didst call the little children unto Thyself, bestow thy blessing and favor upon all children. Draw them to Thyself that they may be kept from all sin and wrong. Make them obedient, happy, brave and good, and evermore reveal to them the hidden things of thy wisdom and thy love. Give unto us all the childlike heart that we may be meet for thy kingdom here and hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

O GOD, the strength of all those who put their trust in Thee; mercifully accept our prayers; and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments we may please Thee, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Twenty-sixth Day

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. — 2 Cor. 4: 16 — 5: 1.

Alternative Readings. — John 17: 11–17; 1 Pet. 1: 3–8.

O LORD our God, under the shadow of thy wings let us hope. Thou wilt support us, both when little, and even to gray hairs. When our strength is of Thee, it is strength; but, when our own, it is feebleness. We return unto Thee, O Lord, that from their weariness our souls may rise towards Thee, leaning on the things which Thou hast created, and passing on to Thyself, who hast wonderfully made them; for with Thee is refreshment and true strength. Amen.

— *St. Augustine.*

O GOD, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. Amen.

— *Gregorian Sacramentary, A. D. 590.*

Twenty-seventh Day

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. — MATT. 25 : 34–40.

Alternative Readings. — MICAH 6 : 6–8; PHIL. 2 : 5–13.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

O LORD, give us more charity, more self-denial, more likeness to Thee. Teach us to sacrifice our comforts to others, and our likings for the sake of doing good. Make us kindly in thought, gentle in word, generous in deed. Teach us that it is better to give than to receive; better to forget ourselves than to put ourselves forward; better to minister than to be ministered unto. And unto Thee, the God of Love, be glory and praise for ever. AMEN.

— *Henry Alford.*

Twenty-eighth Day

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. — JAMES 1 : 2–6, 12, 16, 17.

Alternative Readings. — PS. 1; HEB. 11 : 1–6.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, mercifully grant that the frequent meditation of thine infinite goodness may make us to love Thee above all things; that we may here steadfastly believe what we do not see, and, hereafter, in the blessed vision of thy glory, see what we now cannot comprehend; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *Book of Hours, 1865.*

O GRACIOUS God, who maketh all things work together for the good of them that love Thee, grant us such love to Thee that we may find the good in all thy gifts and creatures, and use all to thy glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

Twenty-ninth Day

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish.

— John 10: 14-18, 27, 28.

Alternative Readings. — Luke 15: 3-7; Rev. 7: 13-17.

O SHEPHERD of the sheep, who didst promise to carry the lambs in thine arms, and to lead us by the still waters, help us to know the peace which passeth understanding. Give us to drink that heavenly draught which is life, the calm patience which is content to bear what God giveth. Have mercy upon us, and hear our prayers. Lead us gently when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death. Guide us, till at last, in the assembly of thy saints, we may find rest forevermore. Amen.

— *George Dawson.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the brightness of faithful souls, fill the world with thy glory, we pray Thee, and show Thyself, by the radiance of thy light, to all the nations of the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *Gregorian Sacramentary, A.D. 590.*

Thirtieth Day

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

— Col. 3: 12–17.

Alternative Readings. — 1 Cor. 13; Matt. 7: 1–5.

O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before Thee. Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O BLESSED Lord, who hast commanded us to love one another, grant us grace that, having received thine undeserved bounty, we may love every one in Thee and for Thee. We implore thy clemency for all; but especially for the friends whom thy love has given to us. Love Thou them, O Thou Fountain of love, and make them to love Thee with all their heart, that they may will, and speak, and do those things only which are pleasing to Thee. Amen.

— *St. Anselm (1033–1109).*

Thirty-first Day

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. — JOHN 15 : 1–7.

Alternative Readings. — PS. 42 : 1–5; EPH. 4 : 13–16.

O ALMIGHTY God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN. — *Gelasian Sacramentary, A.D. 492.*

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto Thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name Thou wilt grant their requests; fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. AMEN.

— *St. Chrysostom.*

A Prayer for Loved Ones

O GOD, the Protector and Helper of all thy children, we commit unto Thee and to thy fatherly keeping all our loved ones, beseeching Thee to grant unto them every good gift for the body and the soul, and to unite us all, present and absent, in true faith and love, in Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

[This prayer may be used in place of, or in addition to, the prayers for each day.]

A Family Prayer

EVER living and gracious heavenly Father, Thou art the author of all worlds and source of all life. Thou causest our eyes to behold the morning and dost shine in our hearts by the revelation of Jesus Christ thy Son. We give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, that Thou givest us another day for thy service. In all things make us to know thy will, and strengthen us unto the doing of the same. Guide us in all our perplexities of this day, and when we know not the way kindly lead us by thy providence. Baptize us in thy Spirit, and continually refresh us with thy presence. Give thy Spirit to little children and cause them to dwell together in peace. Be pleased, O Lord, to bless all who are dear to us. Upon the dwellings of our neighbors grant thy benediction; cause us to live in love and charity with all. For the increase of spiritual light and power, the building of thy Church and the triumph of the gospel in our land and in every land we pray; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

— *From the American Book of Church Services.*

Services for Special Days

The Lord's Day

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. — JOHN 4 : 24.

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. — MATT. 4 : 4.

And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath. — MARK 2 : 27.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. — LUKE 4 : 16–19.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 84; Is. 58 : 13, 14; REV. 1 : 10–16.

O LORD our God, who hast bidden the light to shine out of darkness, who hast again wakened us to praise thy goodness and ask for thy grace: accept now, in thy endless mercy, the sacrifice of our worship and thanksgiving, and grant unto us all such requests as may be wholesome for us. Make us to be children of the light and of the day, and heirs of thy everlasting inheritance. Remember, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy mercies, thy whole Church; all who join with us in prayer; all our brethren by land or sea, or wherever they may be in thy vast kingdom, who stand in need of thy grace and succour. Pour out upon them the riches of thy mercy, so that we, redeemed in soul and body, and steadfast in faith, may ever praise thy wonderful and holy name. AMEN.

— *Greek Church.*

Additional Prayers for the Lord's Day

LORD of all power and might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things, graft in our hearts the love of thy Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

SHOW the light of thy countenance upon us, O Lord, that the going forth of thy word may give light and understanding, to nourish hearts that are simple; and that while our desire is set on thy commandments, we may receive with open heart the spirit of wisdom and understanding; through Christ our Lord. AMEN.

O GOD, who hast given us this glad and holy day, bestow upon us its true refreshment and peace. We thank Thee for its hallowed associations and memories and anticipations. As our Lord rose from the dead, help us to rise to newness of life in Him. Pour out of thy Spirit upon all who gather in thy Name to-day, and may all worship of Thee be in spirit and in truth. Turn to Thyself all weary and wandering souls. And may this day bring nearer the everlasting kingdom of light and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

For Christmas

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. — LUKE 2: 8–16.

Alternative Readings. — IS. 11: 1–10; MATT. 2: 1–11.

O GOD, who didst cause the most holy night [of the birth of the Christ Child] to be illumined by the rising of the true Light, we beseech Thee that we who know on earth the secret shining of his splendor may win in heaven his eternal joys.

— *Prayer of the First Christmas Mass.*

FATHER of all, who gavest us the unspeakable gift of thine only begotten Son, help us to receive him with gratitude and follow him with patience, and grant that the Day Star from on high may enlighten all nations and bring peace and good will to all hearts. AMEN.

For the New Year

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

— Ps. 16: 5–11.

Alternative Readings. — Ps. 90: 12–17; Rev. 21: 1–7.

MOST gracious God, who hast been infinitely merciful to us, not only in the year past, but through all the years of our life, be pleased to accept our most unfeigned thanks for thine innumerable blessings to us; graciously pardoning the manifold sins and infirmities of our life past, and bountifully bestowing upon us all those graces and virtues which may render us acceptable to Thee. And, every year which Thou shalt be pleased to add to our lives, add also, we humbly implore Thee, more strength to our faith, more ardor to our love, and a greater perfection to our obedience; and grant that, in a humble sincerity and constant perseverance, we may serve Thee most faithfully the remainder of our lives, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

— *Charles How (1661–1745).*

O THOU, who art ever the same, grant us so to pass through the coming year with faithful hearts, that we may be able in all things to please thy loving eyes. Amen.

— *Mozarabic Sacramentary.*

For Good Friday

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. — LUKE 23: 33–35, 39–43, 46.

Alternative Readings. — Is. 53: 1–7; PHIL. 2: 5–11.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

O GOD, who art faithful and just to forgive us our sins, mercifully grant unto us that we may be delivered from the bondage of our sins, and may one day rejoice in perfect liberty in our very Fatherland, which is in heaven. AMEN.

— *Roman Breviary.*

For Easter

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. — MATT. 28: 1–7.

Alternative Readings. — 1 COR. 15: 20–28; JOHN 20: 11–17.

ALMIGHTY God, who through thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech Thee that, as by thy special grace preventing us Thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. AMEN.

ALMIGHTY God, Giver of life, grant unto us thy life, that we may truly live; thy love, that we may greatly rejoice; that we, knowing trouble, and acquainted with grief, may, through the goodly deliverance of faith and hope, come to the large joy of the peace that passeth all understanding. Of thy loving-kindness hear our supplications, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN. — *George Dawson.*

For National Holidays

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.

Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

The Lord shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways. — DEUT. 28: 1–6, 9.

Alternative Readings. — Is. 60: 15–22; Hos. 14.

O THOU who art the God of our fathers and our God, we thank Thee for our citizenship in this land of thy founding and thy favor. The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places; we have a goodly heritage. Be pleased to bless and preserve this our beloved country, and grant that we as a people may hearken diligently unto thy voice that all the blessings of thy goodness may come on us and overtake us. And to thy Name will we give the praise and glory. AMEN.

GOD of the nations, who hast led this people with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm through tempest and trial to unity and peace, graciously lead us through all the days to come. Bestow thy blessing and favor upon thy servant the President of the United States, and all others in authority, and make them wise and steadfast to do thy will. Grant unto us the love of freedom, righteousness, and peace, and help us to advance the coming of thy kingdom. AMEN.

For a Birthday in the Home

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. — Ps. 103: 1–5, 11–13.

Alternative Readings. — Deut. 11: 18–21; Phil. 3: 12–14.

O GOD, our heavenly Father, who crownest us with loving kindnesses and tender mercies, give unto us a deeper sense of thy bestowing and forgiving love, that we may bless Thee with heart and soul. Fit us for truer service and help us to be more Christlike in our lives. Bless him [her] whose birthday this is, and may his [her] life be gladdened by thy presence, strengthened by thy grace, and fruitful in thy service; and grant that the ties of affection and sympathy which bind us together here may be perfected in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD, from whom all good things do come; grant to us, thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that are good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

For Days of Bereavement

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. — JOHN 14: 1–6, 25–27.

Alternative Readings. — 1 PET. 1: 3–8; REV. 21: 21–26.

WE thank Thee, our Father, for the dear and faithful dead, for those who have made the distant heavens a home for us, and whose truth and beauty are even now in our hearts. One by one Thou dost gather the scattered families out of the earthly light into the heavenly glory, from the distractions and strife and weariness of time to the peace of eternity. We thank Thee for the labors and the joys of these mortal years. We thank Thee for our deep sense of the mysteries that lie beyond our dust, and for the eye of faith which Thou hast opened for all who believe in thy Son. May we live altogether in thy faith and love, and in that hope which is full of immortality. AMEN.

— *Rufus Ellis.*

Children's Prayers

Children's Prayers

MORNING

GREAT and holy God, who hast said, I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me, teach me to love Thee. Give me an earnest wish to seek Thee that so I may find Thee. Every day of my life is full of thy kindness and love. Help me to remember Thee. Give me thy grace in my heart. Help me in all my duties. Make me kind and gentle with my playmates. Bless them with me. Bless, too, my parents, brothers, and sisters, and all my friends. Fill the whole world with thy love and truth. Hear my prayer, O God, forgive all my sins, and accept me for the dear Saviour's sake. AMEN.

—*From Daily Devotions for a Child.*

HEAVENLY Father, whose care is over us in all darkness and whose love is brighter than the morning light, I thank Thee for this new day. Bless my life and make it like a little flower that giveth joy to all. Help me to love what is good and true and beautiful. Make me brave and helpful, like my Master. Bless all whom I love. And may thy kingdom come and brighten all the darkness of the world with the light of eternal day. Through Jesus my Saviour and King. AMEN.

JESUS, Lord, to thee I pray,
Guide and guard me through this day.
As the shepherd tends the sheep,
Lord, me safe from evil keep.
And when life, O Lord, is past,
Take me to thyself at last.

Children's Prayers

EVENING

FATHER of all, who dost never sleep, because Thou art never tired, keep watch over me while I rest. I will put my trust in Thee, and not be afraid, for no harm can come to me when Thou art my Keeper. Send down thy peace and love into my heart and fill my mind with happy, holy thoughts. Forgive all in me that Thou canst not love, and make me like Jesus; for Jesus' sake. AMEN.

—*From Daily Devotions for a Child.*

O GOD, whose love has kept me through another day, I thank Thee for all Thou hast given me: for my home, my friends, my hopes, my joys. My cup runneth over. Help me to be thankful and obedient and to love Jesus, who was once a child like me. Bless all homeless children, and all who have never heard of Jesus. And may thy kingdom come and thy will be done in the hearts of all children everywhere, for Jesus' sake. AMEN.

JESUS, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless thy little lamb to-night;
Through the darkness be thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning light.

All this day thy hand has led me,
And I thank thee for thy care;
Thou hast clothed me, warmed me, fed me,
Listen to my evening prayer.

Let my sins be all forgiven;
Bless the friends I love so well;
Take me, when I die, to heaven,
Happy there with thee to dwell. AMEN.

Grace before Meat

Grace before Meat

FOR these and all tokens of thy providence and love, our Father, we thank Thee.

FOR life, for love, for home and daily food, we give Thee thanks, our Father.

[1] GRANT us blessing with these gifts of thy love, our Father, for Jesus' sake. AMEN.

[1] WE praise Thee, our heavenly Father, for thy constant and loving care, and pray that we may be made strong to do thy holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

[1] WE thank Thee, O Lord, for the mercies that are new every morning and fresh every evening. Help us in return to give Thee the supreme love of our hearts and full service of our hands, for Christ's sake. AMEN.

[1] BLESS the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. AMEN.

[1] From Congregational Handbook, "Grace before Meat."

A General Thanksgiving

A General Thanksgiving

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, we, thine unworthy servants, do give Thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech Thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we may show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. AMEN.

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